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STATINTL

# An Arkansas Diary Filled with Entries In Washington

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IT IS difficult to conceive of any year's pageant of events in Washington in which Arkansas, mostly through its elected representatives in Congress, did not play a significant role. This year, 1962, was no exception.

January was perhaps the busiest and most varied month in the diary. After Congress got off to its usual chaotic start, the Civil Service Commission made the first entry in the year's log, convicting three State Employment Security Division employees of violating the Hatch Act which prohibits political activity by federally connected officials.

The commission found that Luke Arnett, William Watkins and Charles F. Wood had participated in Governor Faubus' 1960 re-election campaign. The state was directed to fire the three or face withholding of Federal grants from the ESD.

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THIS CAME at a time also when the political hot stove league was flaming to a climax with rumors and predictions on the upcoming campaign. Arkansas-wise these centered around what Faubus was going to do, whether Representative Catherine Norrell of Monticello would challenge Representative Oren Harris of El Dorado in their about-to-be merged district, how Senator J. William Fulbright's re-election was shaping up, and what Representative Dale Alford of Little Rock was up to.

Then President Kennedy made a note on the ledger by introducing a budget that was weighted with more than \$80,000,000 in requests for Arkansas public works, biggest slice for any state.

The Army Times printed a story that Fort Chaffee was going to be shuttered whenever the Berlin Crisis reservists there were moved out. This put Representative James W. Trimble's shoulder to the wheel with considerable force.

Finally, Fulbright rose from a sick bed to vote against Senate confirmation of John A. McCone as new director of the Central Intelligence Agency to demonstrate his pique at CIA's penchant for super secrecy and Congress-snubbing.

## February's Explosion

FEBRUARY began more calmly, only to explode in a patented McClellan burst over any slight, real or imagined. This time it was real, an Administration attempt to wrest from Senator John McClellan's Government Operations Committee its reorganization plan to create a cabinet Department of Urban Affairs.

McClellan, a frank foe of the plan, nevertheless held expedited hearings on it to speed the measure to a Senate vote. The Administration couldn't wait, however, and tried to snatch it from the committee. McClellan, in his monumental wrath, prevailed and the whole thing became the first of several Kennedy black eyes at the hands of the lawmakers.

Apparently unshaken, the president paused in his viewing of Lt. Col. John Glenn's space shot televising February 20 to assure Fulbright and Trimble Chaffee would be kept open under any circumstances.

By March, the pace had slackened considerably. All that happened in March was that Governor Faubus told the Civil Service Commission Arnett and Wood would stay on the ESD payroll. (Watkins had voluntarily resigned). President Kennedy nominated Pat Henderson of England and Dan Douglas of Bentonville to be U. S. Marshals in Arkansas after an unusual delay allegedly prompted by Henderson's race posture, and the Internal Revenue Service moved in in force to canvass Fordyce taxpayers.

Business picked up in April. Mrs. Norrell announced her decision not to run for re-election, giving Harris a relatively clear field, and Faubus visited Washington, maintaining his cat-that-ate-the-canary silence on his political plans. A U. S. Chamber of Commerce round of festivities brought scores of Arkansans to the capital including oilman Charles Murphy of El Dorado who jolted the state chamber banquet with a frank and eloquent speech about Arkansas converting its illiterates to an asset.

## Maytime Uneventful

MAY WAS relatively uneventful except for another Arkansas delegation that came to wring more river money out of Congress and Mills' pronouncement of medicare's death sentence despite a heated and heavy defense by the Administration. The Civil Service Commission finally lowered the boom on the Arkansas ESD, with a resultant loss of funds.

June got busier with McClellan launching his back-to-back probes of the American Guild of Variety Artists and Billie Sol Estes, Representative E. C. Gathings of West Memphis trying to salvage a shell-pocked farm bill and Mills winning a massive victory in House passage of the trade bill. Mills and McClellan virtually cornered every June headline there was.